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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/566,306	01/27/2006	David H. Tracy	BCR-016.0P US	1902
22840 7590 10/30/2008 GE HEALTHCARE BIO-SCIENCES CORP. PATENT DEPARTMENT 800 CENTENNIAL AVENUE PISCATAWAY, NJ 08855				
EXAMINER SUAREZ, FELIX E				
ART UNIT 2857		PAPER NUMBER		
MAIL DATE 10/30/2008		DELIVERY MODE PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/566,306

Applicant(s)

TRACY, DAVID H.

Examiner

FELIX E. SUAREZ

Art Unit

2857

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 February 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-46 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-46 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 27 January 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9 November 2006
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Inventor's Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Minor Informalities

1. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

In page 17 line 21 of the specification, phrase "a 2-D CCD" should be --a 2-Dimensional Charge Coupled Device (2-D CCD)--.

In Claim 44 page 56 line 2 the phrase "bad ROI" should be --bad Region of Interest (ROI)--.

Correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-3, 6-27, 32, 34-44 and 46, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over Kochergin et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,819,812).

With respect to claim 1, Kochergin et al. (hereafter Kochergin) teaches a method for quantization of surface-binding optical resonance profiles comprising, in combination, the steps of:

obtaining at least one calibration (see col. 11, lines 26-31, control block 49 responds to the electrical detection signal from the photo-detector 48 in the example embodiment by calibrating a variable voltage or other tuning signal for the tunable Vertical Cavity, Surface Emitting Laser VCSEL) result from a calibration scan (see col. 11, lines 4-8, the tunable VCSEL 30, by continuously scanning its output spectrum) of at least one Region of Interest (see col. 11, lines 42-51, the Fabry-Perot cavity region that contains the active material);

generating, from at least one calibration result, a calibration profile for at least one scanned Region of Interest (see col. 9, lines 50-55; FIG. 4 exemplary transmission optical power profile of a sensor employing Surface Plasmon Resonance SPR);

obtaining at least one experimental result from an experimental scan of at least one Region of Interest (see col. 14 line 66 to col. 15 line 10, as a result of the scan through the wavelength range, the optical signal at the input to the optical detector 48 as well as the electrical signal from the optical detector will appear as indicated in illustration FIG. 3C or 3G for the reflection mode and FIG 3D or 3H for the transmission mode); and

determining at least one resonance parameter for at least one experimental result relative to at least one calibration profile (see col. 16, lines 49-53, the valley in the curve, caused by a surface Plasmon, is shifted in wavelength).

With respect to claim 2, Kochergin further teaches that, one resonance parameter is an angle shift (see col. 4, lines 1-13, the angle of minimum reflective intensity is the resonance angle).

With respect to claim 3, Kochergin further teaches that, one resonance parameter is a wavelength shift (see col. 16, lines 49-53, the valley in the curve, caused by a surface Plasmon, is shifted in wavelength).

With respect to claim 6, Kochergin further teaches, the step of computing at least one calibration set statistic (see col. 7, lines 10-26, wavelength at minimum, maximum or slope; and see col. 16, lines 64-67, lasers and/or optical spectrometers will provide at least an order of magnitude increase in the system resolution through computational and statistical means).

With respect to claim 7, Kochergin further teaches, including the step of displaying at least one calibration set statistic (see col. 14, lines 14-20, signal waveforms illustrated in FIGS. 3A-3J), .

With respect to claim 8, Kochergin further teaches, said step of generating a calibration profile for at least one scanned Region of Interest comprises the steps of:

generating a raw calibration profile (see col. 17, lines 25-33; and FIG. 5A, the scanned absorption edge); and

determining at least one derivative of said calibration profile from the raw calibration profile (see col. 17, lines 49-65, FIGS 5B and 5C are illustrative examples of improved, taking first derivative, as shown in FIG. 5B and second derivative, as shown in FIG. 5C).

With respect to claim 9, Kochergin further teaches, said step of generating a calibration profile for at least one scanned Region of Interest further comprises the step of smoothing said raw calibration profile (see col. 18, lines 1-12, the spectra can be interpolated, smoothed or subjected to any other mathematical analysis).

With respect to claim 10, Kochergin further, said step of generating a calibration profile for at least one scanned Region of Interest further comprises the step of determining at least one property of said calibration profile from the raw calibration profile (see col. 18, lines 1-12, perform the determination of wavelength position utilizing the peak of the first derivative).

With respect to claim 11, Kochergin further teaches that, the properties determined are selected from the group consisting of Full Width at Half Maximum, nominal resonance angle, and maximum intensity (see col. 4, lines 1-

13, the angle of minimum reflective intensity is the resonance angle, maximum coupling, a half-width).

With respect to claim 12, Kochergin further teaches, said step of generating a calibration profile further comprises the step of sub-sampling the smoothed raw calibration profile (see col. 18, lines 1-12, the spectra can be interpolated, smoothed or subjected to any other mathematical analysis).

With respect to claim 13, Kochergin further teaches, said step of generating a calibration profile further comprises the step of extrapolating the ends of the sub-sampled smoothed raw calibration profile (see col. 18, lines 1-12, the spectra can be interpolated, smoothed or subjected to any other mathematical analysis).

With respect to claim 14, Kochergin further teaches, said step of generating a calibration profile further comprises the step of performing a second smooth of the sub-sampled smoothed raw calibration profile (see col. 17, lines 49-65, FIGS 5B and 5C are illustrative examples of improved, taking first derivative, as shown in FIG. 5B and second derivative, as shown in FIG. 5C).

With respect to claim 16, Kochergin further teaches, said step of generating a calibration profile further comprises the steps of:

determining the quality of the calibration profile (see col. 15, lines 45-58, since communications art has advanced into the tens of GHz and slower scanning speeds can be tolerate in practical situations, greater wavelength resolution could be obtained); and

marking the calibration profile according to the quality determination (see col. 15, lines 48-55, further, since typical Bragg reflection peaks wavelength widths are on the order of hundreds of picometers).

With respect to claim 17, Kochergin further teaches including the step of performing a preliminary quality check on at least one calibration result (see col. 15, lines 17-30, calibration defines the relationship between a change in the stimulating parameter and a corresponding change in a wavelength. The wavelength value is determined by monitoring the wavelength control signal and comparing it, to the wavelength reference; and see col. 16, lines 19-22, the number of wavelength reference points is determined by the accuracy and linearity of the laser tuning mechanism and the required accuracy of the physical parameter measurement).

With respect to claim 18, Kochergin further teaches including the step of flagging at least one calibration result in memory as valid or invalid according to the results of the preliminary quality check (see col. 15, lines 25-30, many computation algorithms can perform the determination of the wavelength position

of the minima or maxima).

With respect to claim 19, Kochergin further teaches, including the step of computing a derivative of at least one calibration profile (see col. 17, lines 49-65, FIGS 5B and 5C are illustrative examples of improved, taking first derivative, as shown in FIG. 5B and second derivative, as shown in FIG. 5C).

With respect to claim 20, Kochergin further teaches including the step of displaying at least one scan result to a user (see col. 14, lines 14-20, signal waveforms illustrated in FIGS. 3A-3J).

With respect to claim 21, Kochergin further, said step of determining at least one resonance parameter for said experimental scan of at least one Region of Interest comprises the steps of:

calculating an estimated resonance shift (see col. 16, lines 49-55, the absolute value of said shifted wavelength provides a very precise information about the concentration of, for example, a reagent in a solution);

calculating at least one interpolated profile from said estimated resonance shift and said calibration profile (see col. 15, lines 58-60, interpolation of the spectra data from the sensor array by a mathematically smooth, continuous function of time);

fitting said experimental scan, using said interpolated calibration profile (see col. 15, lines 58-60, interpolation of the spectra data from the sensor array by a mathematically smooth, continuous function of time);

obtaining fit coefficients from said step of fitting (see col. 16, lines 14-19, knowledge of the predetermined cycle rate, or waveform, of the voltage or other tuning signal, together with such reference wavelengths, provides the signal processing circuit with sufficient information to synchronize the beginning of each new tuning cycle with the laser wavelength);

calculating, from the fit coefficients (see col. 16, lines 9-14, grating or cell coefficients), a residual resonance shift from the resonance shift (see col. 16, lines 9-22, the number of wavelength reference points is determined by the accuracy and linearity of the laser tuning mechanism and the required accuracy of the physical parameter measurement);

calculating an improved estimate of the resonance shift (see col. 16, lines 49-55, the absolute value of said shifted wavelength provides a very precise information about the concentration of, for example, a reagent in a solution); and

iterating until the value of the resonance shift converges to a predetermined convergence criterion (see col. 16, lines 1-14, tuning control or feedback).

With respect to claim 22, Kochergin further teaches said step of determining at least one resonance parameter for said experimental scan of at

least one Region of Interest comprises the step of calculating fit residuals (see col. 13, lines 1-10, each Bragg grating sensor within sensor array 45 reflects a predetermined narrow wavelength band of light and passes the remaining wavelengths on toward the next sensor).

With respect to claim 23, Kochergin further teaches said step of determining at least one resonance parameter further includes the step of estimating the time of scan minimum (see col. 15, lines 32-45, at a frequency of only 1kHz each scan takes 1 millisecond).

With respect to claim 24, Kochergin further teaches said step of determining at least one resonance parameter further includes the step of initially priming the experimental scan to within the limits of the calibration profile (see col. 15, lines 32-38, during each full tunable VCSEL wavelength scan, N intensity measurement points are taken. The number of N could be adequately large even if the tunable VCSEL could be operated at a maximum tuning speed of tens of kHz).

With respect to claim 25, Kochergin further teaches said step of determining at least one resonance parameter further includes the step of fitting to a sweet zone, comprising the steps of:

truncating the interpolated profile to the sweet zone (see col. 15, lines 53-65, this in turn will allow the interpolation of the spectral data from the sensor array by a mathematically smooth, continuous function of time. Many applicable mathematical techniques and their electronic implementations are known in the art); and

re-determining the resonance parameter utilizing the truncated interpolated profile (see col. 16, lines 49-55, the absolute value of said shifted wavelength provides a very precise information about the concentration of, for example, a reagent in a solution).

With respect to claim 26, Kochergin further teaches said step of determining at least one resonance parameter further includes the step of performing initial data validity checks (see col. 15, lines 32-38, during each full tunable VCSEL wavelength scan, N intensity measurement points are taken. The number of N could be adequately large even if the tunable VCSEL could be operated at a maximum tuning speed of tens of kHz).

With respect to claim 27, Kochergin further teaches said step of performing initial data validity checks comprises the steps of:

checking profile availability; checking self-consistency of data; and checking scan indexing (see col. 17, lines 49-67, detecting precisely the spectral position of an absorption band with a very wide maximum, such as the long pass

band of a semiconductor; In case of a pure semiconductor, the sensor will be self-calibrating).

With respect to claim 32, Kochergin further teaches that, 32. The method of claim 1, further including the step of performing a chip qualification check (see col. 17, lines 49-67, detecting precisely the spectral position of an absorption band with a very wide maximum, such as the long pass band of a semiconductor; In case of a pure semiconductor, the sensor will be self-calibrating since the wavelength dependence of the absorption edge is very well known).

With respect to claim 34, Kochergin teaches an apparatus for quantization of surface-binding optical resonance profiles comprising, in combination:

calibration module, said calibration module comprising:

calibration scan result fetcher (see col. 11, lines 26-31, control block 49 responds to the electrical detection signal from the photo-detector 48 in the example embodiment by calibrating a variable voltage or other tuning signal for the tunable Vertical Cavity, Surface Emitting Laser VCSEL; and see col. 11, lines 4-8, the tunable VCSEL 30, by continuously scanning its output spectrum); and

calibration profile creation module (see col. 9, lines 50-55; FIG. 4 exemplary transmission optical power profile of a sensor employing Surface Plasmon Resonance SPR); and

fitting module, said fitting module comprising:

experimental scan result fetcher (see col. 16, lines 14-19, knowledge of the predetermined cycle rate, or waveform, of the voltage or other tuning signal, together with such reference wavelengths, provides the signal processing circuit with sufficient information to synchronize the beginning of each new tuning cycle with the laser wavelength);

calibration profile fetcher (see col. 9, lines 50-55; FIG. 4 exemplary transmission optical power profile of a sensor employing Surface Plasmon Resonance SPR); and

resonance shift determination module (see col. 9, lines 50-55; FIG. 4 exemplary transmission optical power profile of a sensor employing Surface Plasmon Resonance SPR).

With respect to claim 35, Kochergin further teaches said calibration profile creation module further includes a curve smoother (see col. 15, lines 53-60, Bragg gratings employing phase shifts, allows the interpolation of the spectral data from the sensor array by a mathematically smooth, continuous function of time).

With respect to claim 36, Kochergin further teaches said calibration profile creation module further includes a sub-sampler (see col. 15, lines 53-60, Bragg gratings employing phase shifts, allows the interpolation of the spectral data from

the sensor array by a mathematically smooth, continuous function of time).

With respect to claim 37, Kochergin further teaches said calibration profile creation module further includes a curve smoother and a sub-sampler (see col. 15, lines 53-60, Bragg gratings employing phase shifts, allows the interpolation of the spectral data from the sensor array by a mathematically smooth, continuous function of time).

With respect to claim 38, Kochergin further teaches including a resonance parameter calculator (see col. 3, lines 40-46, SPR, Surface Plasmon Resonance-based sensors for biological and/or chemical monitoring).

With respect to claim 39, Kochergin further teaches that, the calculated resonance parameters are selected from the group consisting of estimated absolute resonance point, time of resonance minimum, diagnostic information, and quality information (see col. 4, lines 52-65, in a non-waveguide optical scheme with 5000 pixels, the SPR minimum is read by at least 2000 pixels).

With respect to claim 40, Kochergin further teaches including an instrument control and data acquisition module (see col. 1, lines 47-52, a Vertical Cavity, Surface Emitting Laser VCSEL with an integrated micro-

electromechanical MEMS tuning).

With respect to claim 41, Kochergin further teaches including a test and support module (see col. 1, lines 47-52, a Vertical Cavity, Surface Emitting Laser VCSEL with an integrated micro-electromechanical MEMS tuning).

With respect to claim 42, Kochergin teaches a method for qualifying a surface Plasmon resonance chip comprising, in combination, the steps of:

obtaining a golden calibration profile for the type of chip to be qualified (see col. 11, lines 26-31, control block 49 responds to the electrical detection signal from the photo-detector 48 in the example embodiment by calibrating a variable voltage or other tuning signal for the tunable Vertical Cavity, Surface Emitting Laser VCSEL; and see col. 5, lines 19-44, an illustrative example of a characteristic absorber/reflector material is a semiconductor);

obtaining at least one calibration result from a calibration scan of at least one Region of Interest of a chip to be tested (see col. 9, lines 50-55; FIG. 4 exemplary transmission optical power profile of a sensor employing Surface Plasmon Resonance SPR);

comparing said at least one calibration result to said golden calibration profile to obtain at least one comparison result (see col. 16, lines 49-53, the valley in the curve, caused by a surface Plasmon, is shifted in wavelength); and

determining whether said chip is suitable for use by applying selection criteria to said at least one comparison result (see col. 7, lines 10-26, wavelength at minimum, maximum or slope; and see col. 16, lines 64-67, lasers and/or optical spectrometers will provide at least an order of magnitude increase in the system resolution through computational and statistical means).

With respect to claim 43, Kochergin further teaches including the step of displaying chip qualification results to the user (see col. 14, lines 14-20, signal waveforms illustrated in FIGS. 3A-3J).

With respect to claim 44, Kochergin further teaches that, the step of determining whether the chip is suitable includes the step of incrementing a "bad ROI" count (see col. 11, lines 42-51, the Fabry-Perot cavity region that contains the active material, alternately, as a reflective or partially reflective single layer, such as aluminum).

With respect to claim 46, Kochergin further teaches that, the step of comparing the calibration includes the step of initializing a fit module with a chip qualification parameter set (see col. 4, lines 1-13, the angle of minimum reflective intensity is the resonance angle).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 4, 5, 28-31, 33 and 45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kochergin et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,819,812) in view of Thornton (U.S. Patent No. 7,282,242).

With respect to claim 4, Kochergin et al. (hereafter Kochergin) teaches all the features of the claimed invention, except that Kochergin does not teach, the step of storing at least one calibration profile in memory.

But Thornton teaches in an optical spectroscopy apparatus that, once a signal is digitized, it is processed within a digital signal processor (DPS) which performs the function of multi-tone phase sensitive detection for the several tones simultaneously present on the photo-detector sensor; Thornton also teaches that at the DPS, the amplitudes as well as phase differences of the multi-tone frequency signals are compared with known spectral data, stored in the memory (see Thornton; col. 22, lines 24-39).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Kochergin to include the digital signal

processor (DSP) as taught by Thornton, because the DSP of Thornton allows to compare data from the photo-detector with known spectral data, stored in the memory, as desired.

With respect to claim 5, Kochergin teaches all the features of the claimed invention, except that Kochergin does not teach,

the step of storing at least one resonance parameter in memory.

But Thornton teaches in an optical spectroscopy apparatus that, once a signal is digitized, it is processed within a digital signal processor (DPS) which performs the function of multi-tone phase sensitive detection for the several tones simultaneously present on the photo-detector sensor; Thornton also teaches that at the DPS, the amplitudes as well as phase differences of the multi-tone frequency signals are compared with known spectral data, stored in the memory (see Thornton; col. 22, lines 24-39).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Kochergin to include a digital signal processor (DSP) as taught by Thornton, because the DSP of Thornton allows to compare data from the photo-detector with known spectral data, stored in the memory, as desired.

With respect to claim 28-31, Kochergin teaches all the features of the claimed invention, except that Kochergin does not teach,

the step of fitting employs a least squares fit;
the step of reporting errors in an error log;
the step of reporting errors utilizes a local error log; nor
the step of reporting errors employs remote error reporting.

But Thornton teaches two statistical analytical models for quantitative analysis, the net analyte signal at the solid line curve and the partial least squares. These two models approaches illustrative what is called spectral residuals (see Thornton; col. 19, lines 33-60).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Kochergin to include a statistical analytical models for quantitative analysis as taught by Thornton, because the statistical analytical models for quantitative analysis of Thornton allows to the partial least squares model to approaches illustrative what is called spectral residuals, as desired.

With respect to claim 33, Kochergin teaches a method for quantization of surface-binding optical resonance profiles comprising, in combination, the steps of:

obtaining at least one calibration (see col. 11, lines 26-31, control block 49 responds to the electrical detection signal from the photo-detector 48 in the example embodiment by calibrating a variable voltage or other tuning signal for the tunable Vertical Cavity, Surface Emitting Laser VCSEL) result from a

calibration scan (see col. 11, lines 4-8, the tunable VCSEL 30, by continuously scanning its output spectrum) of at least one Region of Interest (see col. 11, lines 42-51, the Fabry-Perot cavity region that contains the active material) result from a calibration scan of at least one Region of Interest;

generating, from at least one calibration result, a calibration profile for at least one scanned Region of Interest (see col. 9, lines 50-55; FIG. 4 exemplary transmission optical power profile of a sensor employing Surface Plasmon Resonance SPR), comprising the steps of:

generating a raw calibration profile (see col. 17, lines 25-33; and FIG. 5A, the scanned absorption edge);

smoothing said raw calibration profile (see col. 18, lines 1-12, the spectra can be interpolated, smoothed or subjected to any other mathematical analysis);

sub-sampling the smoothed raw calibration profile (see col. 18, lines 1-12, the spectra can be interpolated, smoothed or subjected to any other mathematical analysis); and

determining properties of said calibration profile from the smoothed raw calibration profile (see col. 18, lines 1-12, perform the determination of wavelength position utilizing the peak of the first derivative);

Kochergin does not teach;
storing at least one calibration profile in memory.

But Thornton teaches in an optical spectroscopy apparatus that, once a signal is digitized, it is processed within a digital signal processor (DPS) which performs the function of multi-tone phase sensitive detection for the several tones simultaneously present on the photo-detector sensor; Thornton also teaches that at the DPS, the amplitudes as well as phase differences of the multi-tone frequency signals are compared with known spectral data, stored in the memory (see Thornton; col. 22, lines 24-39).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Kochergin to include a digital signal processor (DSP) as taught by Thornton, because the DSP of Thornton allows to compare data from the photo-detector with known spectral data, stored in the memory, as desired.

Kochergin further teaches;

computing a derivative of at least one calibration profile (see col. 17, lines 49-65, FIGS 5B and 5C are illustrative examples of improved, taking first derivative, as shown in FIG. 5B and second derivative, as shown in FIG. 5C);

obtaining at least one experimental result from an experimental scan of at least one Region of Interest (see col. 16, lines 49-55, the absolute value of said shifted wavelength provides a very precise information about the concentration of, for example, a reagent in a solution);

determining a resonance shift of at least one experimental result relative to at least one calibration profile, comprising the steps of:

calculating an estimated resonance shift (see col. 16, lines 49-55, the absolute value of said shifted wavelength provides a very precise information about the concentration of, for example, a reagent in a solution);

calculating at least one interpolated profile from said estimated resonance shift and said calibration profile (see col. 15, lines 58-60, interpolation of the spectra data from the sensor array by a mathematically smooth, continuous function of time);

fitting said experimental scan, using said interpolated calibration profile (see col. 16, lines 14-19, knowledge of the predetermined cycle rate, or waveform, of the voltage or other tuning signal, together with such reference wavelengths, provides the signal processing circuit with sufficient information to synchronize the beginning of each new tuning cycle with the laser wavelength);

obtaining fit coefficients from said step of fitting (see col. 16, lines 14-19, knowledge of the predetermined cycle rate, or waveform, of the voltage or other tuning signal, together with such reference wavelengths, provides the signal processing circuit with sufficient information to synchronize the beginning of each new tuning cycle with the laser wavelength);

calculating, from the fit coefficients (see col. 16, lines 9-14, grating or cell coefficients), a residual resonance shift from the resonance shift (see col. 16, lines 19-22, the number of wavelength reference points is determined by the accuracy and linearity of the laser tuning mechanism and the required accuracy of the physical parameter measurement);

calculating an improved estimate of the resonance shift (see col. 16, lines 49-55, the absolute value of said shifted wavelength provides a very precise information about the concentration of, for example, a reagent in a solution);

calculating fit residuals (see col. 16, lines 9-22, the number of wavelength reference points is determined by the accuracy and linearity of the laser tuning mechanism and the required accuracy of the physical parameter measurement);

iterating until the estimated value of the resonance shift converges to a predetermined convergence criterion(see col. 16, lines 1-14, tuning control or feedback); and

estimating the time of scan minimum (see col. 15, lines 32-45, at a frequency of only 1kHz each scan takes 1 millisecond); and
displaying at least one scan result to a user (see col. 14, lines 14-20, signal waveforms illustrated in FIGS. 3A-3J).

With respect to claim 45, Kochergin teaches all the features of the claimed invention, except that Kochergin does not teach,

the step of storing a "bad ROI" number for display.

But Thornton teaches in an optical spectroscopy apparatus that, once a signal is digitized, it is processed within a digital signal processor (DPS) which performs the function of multi-tone phase sensitive detection for the several tones simultaneously present on the photo-detector sensor; Thornton also teaches that at the DPS, the amplitudes as well as phase differences of the multi-tone frequency signals are compared with known spectral data, stored in the memory (see Thornton; col. 22, lines 24-39).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Kochergin to include a digital signal processor (DSP) as taught by Thornton, because the DSP of Thornton allows to compare data from the photo-detector with known spectral data, stored in the memory, as desired.

Conclusion

Prior Art

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Johnston et al. [U.S. Patent No. 6,825,922] describes a position sensitive detector.

Coates et al. [U.S. Patent No. 6,707,043] describes an on site analyzer.

Tracy et al. [U.S. Patent No. 6,029,115] describes an analyzer spectrometric data.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Felix Suarez, whose telephone number is (571) 272-2223. The examiner can normally be reached on weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eliseo Ramos-Feliciano can be reached on (571) 272-7925. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300 for regular communications and for After Final communications.

October 16, 2008

/Felix E Suarez/

Examiner, Art Unit 2857

/Eliseo Ramos-Feliciano/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2857